

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DATE DISTR. 15 Feb 1949

NO. OF PAGES 2

NO. OF ENCLS.

NO. OF ENC
(LISTED BELOW)

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

25X1X6

1. Communist influence in the Colombian labor front showed a marked decrease during November and the early part of December 1948. Although Communist labor leaders who are influential in the directorate of the Confederacion de Trabajadores de Colombia (CTC - Confederation of Workers of Colombia) endeavored to foster labor difficulties and a general strike, it has become evident that their power is waning. Efforts to organize a strike in the strong Road Workers Syndicate failed because of the fact that the laborers refused to follow the recommendations and directions received from the Communist leaders. Communist attempts to cause trouble were again thwarted when the conference of the Federacion de Trabajadores del Valle (Fedetav - Federation of Workers of Valle del Cauca), scheduled for early December in Cali, was suspended by the Minister of Labor two days prior to its opening date.
2. During December the groundwork was laid for two labor conferences. Augusto Duran Ospino, Secretary General of the Partido Comunista Obrero (PCO - Communist Workers Party) and a prominent labor leader, made an extensive trip throughout the Caribbean coastal area, in an attempt to organize a workers' convention under the auspices of the Federacion Nacional de Transportes Fluvial, Maritimo, Portuario y Aerea (Fedenal - National Federation of River, Sea, Port, and Air Transportation) to be held in Barranquilla during the early part of 1949. Preparations were also made for a meeting of the Federacion de Petroleros de Colombia (Fedepetrol - Federation of Petroleum Workers of Colombia) to be held in Cartagena in the middle of January 1949.
3. The largest strike during December was that of the public school teachers of the Department of Valle del Cauca. Approximately 1500 of these teachers demonstrated in Cali on 3 December 1948 calling for a strike of all teachers in the department because their demands for wage increases of approximately 60 pesos per month had not been granted by the Governor. The parade was very orderly with no evidence of violence. This strike assumed added political significance when the CTC announced that it would throw its complete support to the teachers. Pedro J. Abella, Secretary General of the CTC and member of the Partido Comunista de Colombia (PCC - Communist Party of Colombia) arrived in Cali on 7 December 1948 for the specific purpose of directing the teachers' strike. On the evening of his arrival he conferred with local leaders of the Sindicato de Maestros (School Teachers Syndicate).

WARNING NOTICE: THIS DISTRIBUTION LISTING MUST BE

CLASSIFICATION EXCISED BEFORE PUBLIC RELEASE OF THIS DOCUMENT.

[illegible]

This document is hereby regraded to
CONFIDENTIAL in accordance with the
letter of 18 October 1978 from the
Director of Central Intelligence to the
Archivist of the United States.
Approved For Release 199
Next Review Date: 2008

Document No. 100-100000000
 NO CHANGE in Class. ☐
☒ DECLASSIFIED
 Class. CHANGED TO: TS
 DDA Memo: 4 Apr 77
 DDA REG: 77-1763
 Auth: 100-50010-8
 Date: 12-9-78 By: 026

RESTRICTED
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

-2-

4. The Governor of Valle del Cauca announced that the strike was illegal and directed that 1) the teachers should return to work, 2) no salaries were to be paid for the period of the strike, 3) no Christmas bonuses were to be paid until the strike was settled, and 4) that lists should be compiled of those participating in the strike in order that they might be discharged or punished for neglect of duty. In spite of these warnings, the teachers refused to return to their jobs, claiming that they had the support of all organized labor in Valle and that they had conscientiously endeavored to arbitrate their dispute before going on strike. (██████████ comment. Although leftist Liberal newspapers and Vanguardia del Pueblo, the Communist weekly, were outspoken in their support of the teachers, it is not believed that the Railroad Workers Union, one of the strongest affiliates of the CTC in Cali, or any of the other large unions gave more than moral support to the strikers.) 25X1A6a
5. A large public demonstration scheduled for the evening of 10 December did not take place because of governmental intervention. From Bogota came instructions to the Army that the demonstration must be prevented at all costs. On 10 December the entire garrison of Cali (three infantry companies) paraded through the city, and all afternoon truckloads of soldiers were seen in the streets as a warning to those who might be induced to participate in the teachers' demonstration. The Army was warned to be ready for any emergency, and patrols were taken off other duties in order to act as reserves in the event of trouble.
6. By three o'clock in the afternoon all unions had received official word that the demonstration was not to be held and that large gatherings were prohibited. Later some teachers gathered in the central plaza, but no attempt was made to form a parade.
7. A meeting was held on 11 December by the Asociacion de Maestros del Valle at which it was decided that the strike should be temporarily abandoned at least and that the teachers should return to their jobs before making further attempts to deal with the Governor and the local assembly for a peaceful solution of their demands. This decision was reached mostly through the persuasion of the representatives of the Liberal Party and of the Railroad Workers Syndicate, who declared that they could not support a strike which was so manifestly outside the law. It is of interest that Pedro J. Abella had little or nothing to say during the final conferences concerning the strike. He returned to Bogota late that afternoon.

CONFIDENTIAL

RESTRICTED

RESTRICTED